NOSTALGIA

Modernisation is the way forward for Woolworth and fire brigade

***MIKE PETTY** AND **JAMES MILNER** LOOK THROUGH THE **CAMBRIDGE NEWS** ARCHIVES AT SOME OF THE STORIES FROM THIS DAY IN THE PAST*

The Woolworth store in Sidney Street

Facelift to bring Woolies up to date -1986

WOOLWORTH in Cambridge is to undergo a massive facelift to bring it up to date. The shop in Sidney Street will close for five weeks while builders work round the clock to gut and rebuild the interior. The new shop will be brighter and more modern with an 80-seater coffee bar, an extended children's toys section and a bigger record department.

Out will go bad sellers – men's and women's clothes and food lines, and the range of toiletries and electrical goods will be drastically reduced.

Spread of hard drugs being contained – 1973

A GROUP of doctors who set up a hard drugs clinic in Cambridge during the 1960s believe they have now contained the spread of heroin addiction in the city.

The first full report on almost seven years work by the containment unit for drug misuse has been produced by Dr Ross Mitchell, a Cambridge consultant psychiatrist.

The unit was established to deal with hard drug addiction and he is not sure whether the same methods could be used to deal with the spread of "soft" drugs.

He said: "The misuse of drugs, like cannabis and LSD, have a large personal, political and ideological component.

"Our concern should be with young people at risk and we should attempt to set up facilities which will recognise this risk and try to provide continuing support."

Punting trade sinking say owners – 1964

PUNT owners say trade is bad with 80 per cent of those available for hire lying idle.

Until 1950, students would take their books to the river in term time, but they don't do it nowadays.

Some hirers use up their £1 deposits and leave the punts, then long-haired types jump in and smash them.

Foreign visitors do much of the damage and the French treat the punts a lot rougher, Scudamore's say.

Their new fibreglass punts have been found too weak: they are too low and not really big or steady enough for hire work.

Fire brigade mobiliser will aid response – 1964

AS the fire brigade mobiliser tape-records the warning call, the operator retrieves a file on the area in question.

There are cards for every village showing the quickest route and full information on individual building with instructions on the appliances needed and the position of hydrants.

The system is vital to allow firefighters to have information allowing a safer battle against the flames but, with new buildings, constantly sprouting the work of documentation is never complete.

Expansion of Ely motor police – 1953

ELY police motor patrols dated back to the first motorisation in 1930 when Austin 12 car was stationed at Ely.

Four years later, March had a car and, by the time the war broke out, there was another at Wisbech.

Two years afterwards, a van joined the force and, before the war ended, there were both cars and vans at March, Wisbech and Ely.

The Traffic Department started in 1946. The first recruit was P.s. A.W. Wilson.

The drivers go through a month's course and are expected to make running repairs. They also handle cine-projectors, cameras and specialised electrical equipment.

Today, the department has one sergeant and 10 constables and soon there will be a 24-hour motor patrol.

In addition, five police officers are equipped with near-silent Velocette 'Ghost' motorcycles and soon all men in out-stations should have them. They will be equipped with wireless like the patrol cars allowing operators to follow the progress of a chase.

Fire breaks out in Petty Cury – 1948

IN one of Cambridge's worst danger spots, the closely-packed buildings of Petty Cury, the most serious fire the town has seen for two years broke out, damaging half of the stock of Messrs Montagu Burton, tailors.

Firemen prevented the fire from spreading to adjoining shops but the whole of Burton's premises were gutted.

Next door is Hutton's tailors where suits, coats and other clothing was covered by dust sheets to prevent damage from fumes.

Burton's manager said: "I went down in the cellar and saw the gas meter on fire and it was just like a giant blow lamp. We salvaged about half the stock."

Spider takes to the air in the rain – 1931

A HEAVY, gusty wind and driving rain greeted Captain C.D. Barnard and his famous monoplane, The Spider, when he visited Cambridge.

But when it abated a number of people took trips knowing they would be dry in the plane.

Twenty readers of the Cambridge Daily News had been given free tickets for a ten-minute flight and enjoyed the experience; one young lady laughingly remarked she felt 'a bit funny' coming down.

Super Ethyl to go on sale again – 1930

'ETHYL' as every motorist knows, is a super motor spirit with remarkable properties.

It causes engines to run more smoothly, delivers more power and eliminates the 'knock' without retarding the spark.

A few years back it was obtainable at petrol filling stations almost everywhere and many motorists cheerfully paid the extra penny a gallon.

But sinister rumours circulated that the lead tetra-ethyl it contained was injurious to health and gradually it disappeared.

Now following tests it will shortly be on sale again at the Olde Castle Hotel garage in Cambridge.

Lightning strikes twice – 1923

MR James Tuck of Ely has been struck by lightning twice, once in 1914 and again on Saturday.

In 1914, he was putting hay into an elevator at Chettisham when there was a vivid flash of lightning.

The fork he was holding was torn from his hands. The lightning scorched his face and left red marks on his arm of a zig-zag shape.

When he recovered, doctors were astonished.

On Saturday, he was driving some pigs. Suddenly, there was a vivid flash of lightning and he was stuck to the ground in a dazed condition.

With the exception of still having a headache he is now little worse for his experience.

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